

7 PRACTICAL TIPS FOR ACTIVITIES

This section provides practical guidelines on key areas that we need to consider in preventing and responding to sexual violence:

- Mapping medical and legal services
- Confidentiality
- How to handle a disclosure of sexual violence
- Supporting those involved
- Listening to survivors
- Knowing your rights

Mapping medical and legal services

Why is this important?

- It is important to note that sexual violence is a criminal offence in many countries.
- There are special medical and legal procedures that need to be followed in reporting this type of offence and there are precautions that need to be taken seriously.

There will be occasions when the church needs to refer and support survivors of sexual violence if the individual:

- choose to make a formal report of sexual violence to the police
- needs to seek medical support for any injuries sustained in the attack

It is important for the church to understand what services exist within their communities so they can help the individual get the care and support they may need.

The church can continue to provide support for the individual and continue to listen to their needs even if they receive professional care and support.

Please note: *Individuals who have survived sexual violence should receive medical attention within 72 to 120 hours of the attack, to ensure they receive treatment to prevent HIV and sexually transmitted diseases. Even if this timeframe has elapsed, please ensure the individual receives medical treatment immediately.*

ACTIVITY (for individuals and churches)

Start by asking the following questions to improve your knowledge of what services are available in your community for survivors of sexual violence.

Medical services

- Where is the local health clinic?
- Does the clinic have trained nurses and doctors who offer medical attention to individuals who have survived sexual violence?

Please note: *It is important to understand that physical evidence can be found on a survivor's body following an attack. If the attack has just happened and if the survivor can receive immediate medical attention, this may assist in a legal case against the perpetrator.*

Legal services

- Where is the local police station?
- Does the local police station have someone responsible for handling cases of sexual violence (including rape cases)?
- Is there a law against sexual violence in your country?
- Find out what happens when a case of sexual violence is reported to the police. What evidence is needed to take the case to court? How long does this process take? Where is the nearest court that deals with cases of sexual violence?

Please note: *Legal services vary from country to country and sometimes the legal system does not work the way it should. This may be an opportunity to advocate for justice.*

Survivor care and support

- Are there counselling services available for survivors to receive counselling?
- Are there 'safe houses' or 'transit houses' in the community where survivors of sexual violence are able to stay while awaiting medical treatment or during the legal process?

Please note: *Sometimes, the locations of 'safe houses' and 'transit houses' are kept secret to provide a safe and secure environment for survivors who may be in danger. Please respect the confidentiality of these locations.*

WHAT CAN THE CHURCH DO?

- As a church, how can you develop relationships with people within each of the services mentioned above?
- Are there practical things the church can do to support survivors, including providing food, counselling, or inviting them to join savings and loans groups that the church runs?
- Raise awareness about sexual violence.
- Train individuals to participate in the following activity, helping them to understand how they can respond to sexual violence.

ACTIVITY (for individuals and groups)

If you see signs of sexual violence and you think that a child or an adult you know may be exposed to sexual violence, what should you do?

Before you answer, think about what is best for the child or adult, your safety, the type of abuse, how to respect the survivor's dignity and privacy, and the services where you live.

1. Who could you talk to? Should you report the abuse? Why? Or why not? What services exist for the survivor? The end goals are to stop sexual violence and get appropriate care and support for the survivor.
2. In a group, discuss the steps you would take and list them on a piece of flipchart paper.
3. Explore with your group any personal or professional barriers you might experience (ie something that may get in your way or stop you from doing something).

Confidentiality

Why is this important?

Sexual violence is a very intimate act of violating the other person so confidentiality must be respected in dealing with such cases. The aim must be to create a safe environment where the survivor of sexual violence is free to express themselves without fear of being judged by those who should be offering help and support. Respectful confidentiality creates opportunities for healing and restoration of dignity.

Guidelines

- The church should seek to treat people with dignity and respect.
- Gossip within the church is sometimes a challenge – this fuels stigma and discrimination instead of the church providing an open, safe space where people can find care and support.
- If someone shares their personal experience with you, do not make promises you cannot keep.

- It is important to share with the individual that there may be limits to keeping confidentiality – for example, if a child has been abused by a parent and is in a dangerous environment at home, there is a legal responsibility to report incidents to the police or social services in some countries. Find out what responsibilities you would have in such a scenario in your country and what you would have to report.

How to handle a disclosure of sexual violence

If an individual talks to you about their own experience of sexual violence, here are some simple steps to help you provide them with appropriate care and support and handle the information sensitively:

When someone tells you about a personal experience of sexual violence:

- Stay **calm** and don't panic.
- Provide a comfortable environment for the survivor to talk. If possible, talk to them in an appropriate, quiet and confidential place.
- Do not be alone with an individual of the opposite sex. If the survivor is of the opposite sex to you, invite a trusted individual of the same gender as the survivor to be present too, first asking the survivor's permission.
- **Listen** carefully.
- Tell the survivor of sexual violence that, whatever happened, it is **not their fault**.
- Tell the survivor that you believe them.
- Write down the survivor's story in their exact words as soon as you are able to. (This will be helpful if they want to report the attack to the police or courts).
- Do not presume to tell them what they should have done to avoid the attack.
- Be supportive and not judgmental. Disclosure can be scary for a survivor.
- You need to ask only four questions:
 - **What** happened?
 - **Who** did this to you?
 - **Where** were you when this happened?
 - **When** did this happen?

¹⁵ This has been used with permission of Restored. Restored is an international Christian alliance working to transform relationships and end violence against women. This flowchart has been adapted from their church pack produced by Restored. See the website: www.restoredrelationships.org.

Supporting those involved

After an individual has disclosed sexual violence to you, it is recommended you follow the process described below.¹⁵

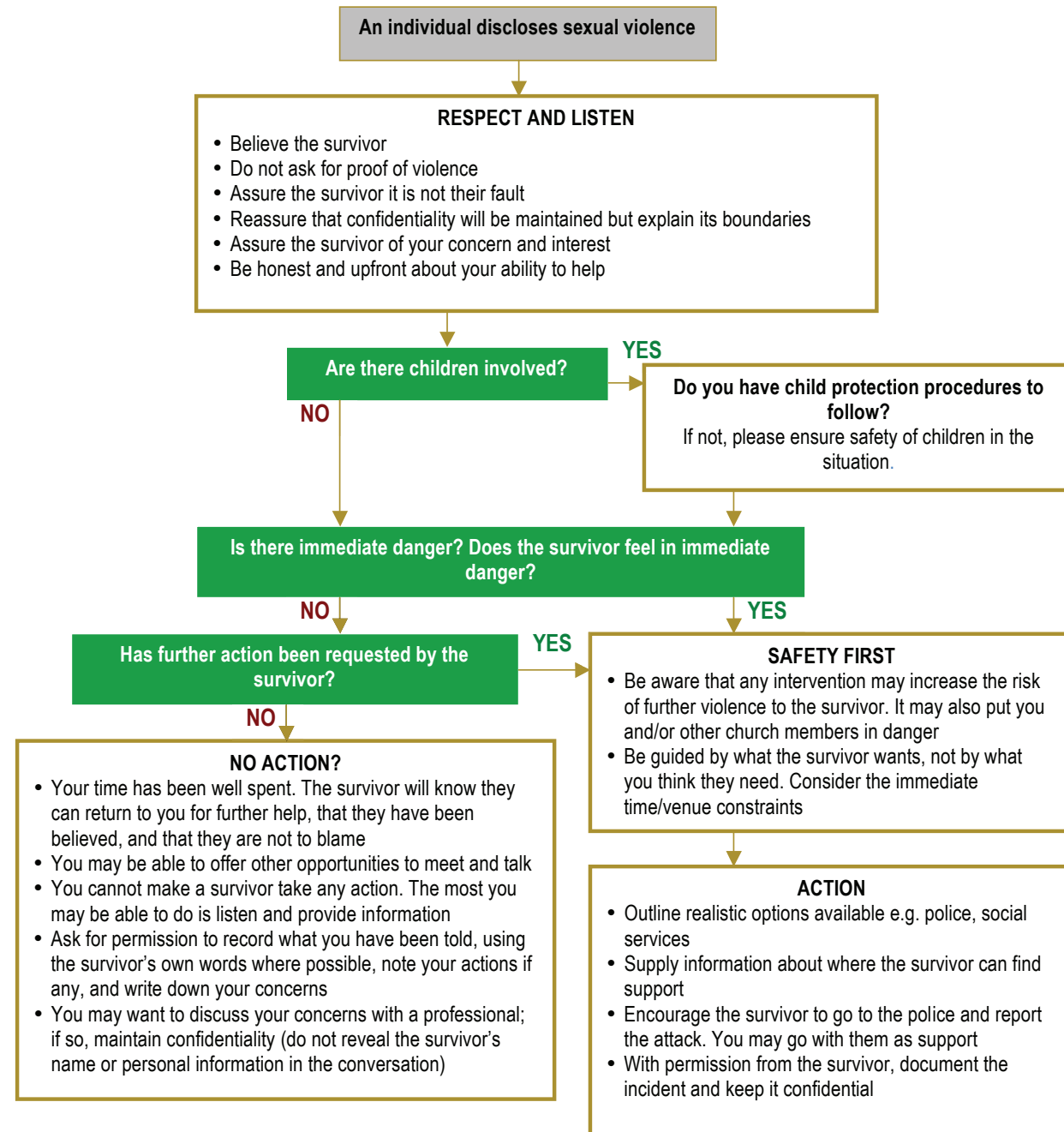


Diagram used with permission from Restored www.restoredrelationships.org

- Get support – you should not deal with this alone. Contact a member of your church or another facilitator. You should always ensure confidentiality so, when seeking support, you should not give the name of the survivor or any information that could identify them, unless you are speaking to the police.
- Your safety is also very important – make sure you are safe and that you are not putting yourself in a dangerous situation.
- If the survivor is in immediate danger, work with the local authorities or community workers to draw up a plan to ensure the survivor’s safety. For example, this could mean the survivor moving to a safe house.

Please note: It is the choice of the individual as to whether they want to report the experience of sexual violence. The role of the church is to provide them with care and support, accompanying them to the police and legal services if necessary. At all times, the survivor needs to be listened to.

Listening to survivors

Survivors of sexual violence often feel that they are not fully heard within the church. It is a challenge for the church to create safe spaces where survivors can receive support and care, as well as healing from the hurt and pain that they have experienced. It is important to note that survivors of sexual violence are members of the community and may even be members of the church congregation.

‘Living with trauma of rape is an everyday struggle for me. I feel as if all the people see that I have been violated. I relive this painful experience every time I see the man who raped me....I relive the fear and have sleepless nights when I see the place where I was raped... I do not trust my community at all for I screamed very loud for help but no one came to my rescue. When I reported this in my church, I was told to pray. Yes, I do pray but it does not take the inside pain away...’
The experience of a survivor of sexual violence in South Africa.

It is often important for survivors to be able to speak about their experiences and receive special support from a trained professional.

There may be trained professionals within the church who are able to meet with the survivor. Alternatively, find out if there are professional services in your community that you can recommend to individuals when they disclose to you.

Counselling is a process that takes time but in the long term it will allow the survivor to feel heard and begin to heal from the emotional trauma of their attack. It is important to ask survivors if there are practical ways that the church can support them, even if they are receiving professional counselling.

Dos and Don'ts when supporting a survivor

When a survivor shares with you their experience of sexual violence, it is important to remember the following guidelines for what to do and what not to do.¹⁶

Do:

1. Find a safe place to talk.
2. Have someone else present – if this is acceptable to the survivor.
3. Allow time for the person to talk.
4. Listen to what they have to say – and take it seriously.
5. Believe them: their description of the abuse is only the beginning of the story.
6. Give priority to their immediate safety.
7. Empower them to make their own decisions.
8. Support and respect their choices.
9. Give them information about relevant support services.
10. Use the expertise of those who are properly trained.
11. Reassure them that they are not to blame. They do not deserve this and it is not God's will for them.
12. Let them know that what the perpetrator has done is wrong and completely unacceptable.
13. Love and support them.
14. Be patient.
15. Protect their confidentiality.

Don't:

1. Judge the person or what they tell you.
2. Make unrealistic promises.
3. Minimise the severity of their experience or the danger they are in.
4. React with disbelief, disgust or anger at what they tell you.
5. React passively or do nothing.
6. Ask them why they did not act in a certain way.
7. Blame them for the violence.
8. Act on the person's behalf without their consent and/or knowledge.
9. Expect them to make decisions quickly, especially if the perpetrator is someone they know.
10. Make decisions for them or tell them what to do.
11. Encourage them to forgive the perpetrator.
12. If their husband is the perpetrator, do not send them home with a prayer/ directive to submit to their husband/ bring him to church/ be a better Christian wife.
13. Contact the person at home, unless they have agreed to this.
14. Approach the perpetrator for their side of the story: this will endanger the survivor.
15. Discuss what they have told you with anyone else, without their permission.

Awareness of national laws and policies on sexual violence

It is important to be aware of the laws that exist in your country relating to sexual violence. To find out more about these laws, you can speak to your local police or contact the local/national government. The Ministry of Gender or Ministry of Justice are the sector of government responsible for such laws.

Awareness of international legislation and policies on sexual violence

There are international policies and legislation on sexual violence, to which some countries have signed up. Below is some information about the main international agreements that exist to date.

A. CEDAW (*Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*)

This is a landmark international agreement that affirms principles of fundamental human rights and equality for women across the world.

It was adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly and was implemented from 1981. Of 193 countries, 187 countries have signed this agreement.

B. UN CSW 2013 Resolutions (*United Nations Commission on the Status of Women*)

Every year, representatives of United Nations member countries gather to evaluate progress on gender equality, identify challenges, set global standards and create policies.

In 2013, the priority theme was: the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls.

There were agreed resolutions which recognised the need to strengthen legal systems and policies, address structures and underlying causes of gender-based violence, and improve evidence of what interventions work to prevent and respond to gender-based violence.

C. Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 1995

This was adopted by countries present at the United Nation's 4th World Conference on Women in 1995. The declaration requires all governments to develop strategies or national plans of action. These action plans are to have specific activities to improve the situation of women, including addressing violence against them

¹⁶ These guidelines have been adapted and used with permission from Restored's church pack on domestic abuse. For a full copy of this resource, please see page 47 for the link to the Restored website. The church pack also includes a list of Dos and Don'ts when dealing with a perpetrator.

STUDY 1: 2 Samuel 13:1–22

¹ In the course of time, Amnon son of David fell in love with Tamar, the beautiful sister of Absalom son of David. ² Amnon became so obsessed with his sister Tamar that he made himself ill. She was a virgin, and it seemed impossible for him to do anything to her.

³ Now Amnon had an adviser named Jonadab son of Shimeah, David's brother. Jonadab was a very shrewd man. ⁴ He asked Amnon, 'Why do you, the king's son, look so haggard morning after morning? Won't you tell me?' Amnon said to him, 'I'm in love with Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister.'

⁵ 'Go to bed and pretend to be ill,' Jonadab said. 'When your father comes to see you, say to him, "I would like my sister Tamar to come and give me something to eat. Let her prepare the food in my sight so I may watch her and then eat it from her hand."' "

⁶ So Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill. When the king came to see him, Amnon said to him, 'I would like my sister Tamar to come and make some special bread in my sight, so I may eat from her hand.'

⁷ David sent word to Tamar at the palace: 'Go to the house of your brother Amnon and prepare some food for him.' ⁸ So Tamar went to the house of her brother Amnon, who was lying down. She took some dough, kneaded it, made the bread in his sight and baked it. ⁹ Then she took the pan and served him the bread, but he refused to eat.

'Send everyone out of here,' Amnon said. So everyone left him. ¹⁰ Then Amnon said to Tamar, 'Bring the food here into my bedroom so I may eat from your hand.' And Tamar took the bread she had prepared and brought it to her brother Amnon in his bedroom. ¹¹ But when she took it to him to eat, he grabbed her and said, 'Come to bed with me, my sister.'

¹² 'No, my brother!' she said to him. 'Don't force me! Such a thing should not be done in Israel! Don't do this wicked thing. ¹³ What about me? Where could I get rid of my disgrace? And what about you? You would be like one of the wicked fools in Israel. Please speak to the king; he will not keep me from being married to you.' ¹⁴ But he refused to listen to her, and since he was stronger than she, he raped her.

¹⁵ Then Amnon hated her with intense hatred. In fact, he hated her more than he had loved her. Amnon said to her, 'Get up and get out!'

¹⁶ 'No!' she said to him. 'Sending me away would be a greater wrong than what you have already done to me.'

But he refused to listen to her. ¹⁷ He called his personal servant and said, 'Get this woman out of my sight and bolt the door after her.' ¹⁸ So his servant put her out and bolted the door after her. She was wearing an ornate robe, for this was the kind of garment the virgin daughters of the king wore. ¹⁹ Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the ornate robe she was wearing. She put her hands on her head and went away, weeping aloud as she went.

²⁰ Her brother Absalom said to her, 'Has that Amnon, your brother, been with you? Be quiet for now, my sister; he is your brother. Don't take this thing to heart.' And Tamar lived in her brother Absalom's house, a desolate woman.

²¹ When King David heard all this, he was furious. ²² And Absalom never said a word to Amnon, either good or bad; he hated Amnon because he had disgraced his sister Tamar.

STUDY 2: John 4:1-30

Now Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John ² although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. ³ So he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.

⁴ Now he had to go through Samaria. ⁵ So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶ Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon.

⁷ When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, 'Will you give me a drink?' ⁸ (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

⁹ The Samaritan woman said to him, 'You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?' (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

¹⁰ Jesus answered her, 'If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.'

¹¹ 'Sir,' the woman said, 'you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? ¹² Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?'

¹³ Jesus answered, 'Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.'

¹⁵ The woman said to him, 'Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.'

¹⁶ He told her, 'Go, call your husband and come back.' ¹⁷ 'I have no husband,' she replied. Jesus said to her, 'You are right when you say you have no husband. ¹⁸ The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.'

¹⁷ Scripture quotations taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. Used with the permission of Hodder and Stoughton Ltd.

¹⁹ ‘Sir,’ the woman said, ‘I can see that you are a prophet.’²⁰ Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.’

²¹ ‘Woman,’ Jesus replied, ‘believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.’²² You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.²³ Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴ God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.’

²⁵ The woman said, ‘I know that Messiah’ (called Christ) ‘is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.’²⁶ Then Jesus declared, ‘I, the one speaking to you—I am he.’

²⁷ Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, ‘What do you want?’ or ‘Why are you talking with her?’

²⁸ Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, ²⁹ ‘Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?’³⁰ They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

STUDY 3: 1 Corinthians 12:12–27

¹² Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. ¹⁴ Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

¹⁵ Now if the foot should say, ‘Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,’ it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear should say, ‘Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,’ it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸ But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. ¹⁹ If they were all one part, where would the body be? ²⁰ As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I don’t need you!’ And the head cannot say to the feet, ‘I don’t need you!’ ²² On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, ²⁴ while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, ²⁵ so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. ²⁶ If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

STUDY 4: Genesis 1:26–28

²⁶ Then God said, ‘Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.’

²⁷ So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. ²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.’

STUDY 5: John 8:1–11

¹ but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

² At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. ³ The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group ⁴ and said to Jesus, ‘Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. ⁵ In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?’⁶ They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him.

But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. ⁷ When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, ‘Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.’⁸ Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground.

⁹ At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. ¹⁰ Jesus straightened up and asked her, ‘Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?’

¹¹ ‘No one, sir,’ she said. ‘Then neither do I condemn you,’ Jesus declared. ‘Go now and leave your life of sin.’

STUDY 6: Judges 19:16–29

¹⁶ That evening an old man from the hill country of Ephraim, who was living in Gibeah (the inhabitants of the place were Benjamites), came in from his work in the fields. ¹⁷ When he looked and saw the traveler in the city square, the old man asked, ‘Where are you going? Where did you come from?’

¹⁸ He answered, ‘We are on our way from Bethlehem in Judah to a remote area in the hill country of Ephraim where I live. I have been to Bethlehem in Judah and now I am going to the house of the Lord.^[a] No one has taken me in for the night.’¹⁹ We have both straw and fodder for our donkeys and bread and wine for ourselves your servants—me, the woman and the young man with us. We don’t need anything.’

²⁰ ‘You are welcome at my house,’ the old man said. ‘Let me supply whatever you need. Only don’t

spend the night in the square.’²¹ So he took him into his house and fed his donkeys. After they had washed their feet, they had something to eat and drink.

²² While they were enjoying themselves, some of the wicked men of the city surrounded the house. Pounding on the door, they shouted to the old man who owned the house, ‘Bring out the man who came to your house so we can have sex with him.’

²³ The owner of the house went outside and said to them, ‘No, my friends, don’t be so vile. Since this man is my guest, don’t do this outrageous thing.’²⁴ Look, here is my virgin daughter, and his concubine. I will bring them out to you now, and you can use them and do to them whatever you wish. But as for this man, don’t do such an outrageous thing.’

²⁵ But the men would not listen to him. So the man took his concubine and sent her outside to them, and they raped her and abused her throughout the night, and at dawn they let her go.²⁶ At daybreak the woman went back to the house where her master was staying, fell down at the door and lay there until daylight.

²⁷ When her master got up in the morning and opened the door of the house and stepped out to continue on his way, there lay his concubine, fallen in the doorway of the house, with her hands on the threshold.²⁸ He said to her, ‘Get up; let’s go.’ But there was no answer. Then the man put her on his donkey and set out for home.

²⁹ When he reached home, he took a knife and cut up his concubine, limb by limb, into twelve parts and sent them into all the areas of Israel.

STUDY 7: Mark 10:13-16

¹³ Some people brought their children to Jesus so that he could bless them by placing his hands on them. But his disciples told the people to stop bothering him.

¹⁴ When Jesus saw this, he became angry and said, ‘Let the children come to me! Don’t try to stop them. People who are like these little children belong to the kingdom of God.’

¹⁵ I promise you that you cannot get into God’s kingdom, unless you accept it the way a child does’.

¹⁶ Then Jesus took the children in his arms and blessed them by placing his hands on them.

STUDY 8: Ephesians 5:21–33

²¹ Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

²² Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord.²³ For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word,²⁷ and to present her to himself

as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.²⁸ In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.²⁹ After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church—³⁰ for we are members of his body.³¹ ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.’³² This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.³³ However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

STUDY 9: Mark 5:24–34

²⁴ So Jesus went with him.

A large crowd followed and pressed around him.²⁵ And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years.²⁶ She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse.²⁷ When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak,²⁸ because she thought, ‘If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed.’²⁹ Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.

³⁰ At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, ‘Who touched my clothes?’

³¹ ‘You see the people crowding against you,’ his disciples answered, ‘and yet you can ask, “Who touched me?”’

³² But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it.³³ Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth.³⁴ He said to her, ‘Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.’

STUDY 9: Matthew 1:18-25

¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, ‘Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.’

²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).

²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵ But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

STUDY 10: Bible Study: Genesis 19:1-26

The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city. When he saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground. ² “My lords,” he said, “please turn aside to your servant’s house. You can wash your feet and spend the night and then go on your way early in the morning.”

“No,” they answered, “we will spend the night in the square.”

³ But he insisted so strongly that they did go with him and entered his house. He prepared a meal for them, baking bread without yeast, and they ate. ⁴ Before they had gone to bed, all the men from every part of the city of Sodom—both young and old—surrounded the house. ⁵ They called to Lot, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them.”

⁶ Lot went outside to meet them and shut the door behind him ⁷ and said, “No, my friends. Don’t do this wicked thing. ⁸ Look, I have two daughters who have never slept with a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do what you like with them. But don’t do anything to these men, for they have come under the protection of my roof.”

⁹ “Get out of our way,” they replied. “This fellow came here as a foreigner, and now he wants to play the judge! We’ll treat you worse than them.” They kept bringing pressure on Lot and moved forward to break down the door.

¹⁰ But the men inside reached out and pulled Lot back into the house and shut the door. ¹¹ Then they struck the men who were at the door of the house, young and old, with blindness so that they could not find the door.

¹² The two men said to Lot, “Do you have anyone else here—sons-in-law, sons or daughters, or anyone else in the city who belongs to you? Get them out of here, ¹³ because we are going to destroy this place. The outcry to the LORD against its people is so great that he has sent us to destroy it.”

¹⁴ So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were pledged to marry his daughters. He said, “Hurry and get out of this place, because the LORD is about to destroy the city!” But his sons-in-law thought he was joking.

¹⁵ With the coming of dawn, the angels urged Lot, saying, “Hurry! Take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be swept away when the city is punished.”

¹⁶ When he hesitated, the men grasped his hand and the hands of his wife and of his two daughters and led them safely out of the city, for the LORD was merciful to them. ¹⁷ As soon as they had brought them out, one of them said, “Flee for your lives! Don’t look back, and don’t stop anywhere in the plain! Flee to the mountains or you will be swept away!”

¹⁸ But Lot said to them, “No, my lords, please! ¹⁹ Your servant has found favor in your eyes, and you have shown great kindness to me in sparing my life. But I can’t flee to the mountains; this disaster will overtake me, and I’ll die. ²⁰ Look, here is a town near enough to run to, and it is small. Let me flee to it—it is very small, isn’t it? Then my life will be spared.”

²¹ He said to him, “Very well, I will grant this request too; I will not overthrow the town you speak of. ²² But flee there quickly, because I cannot do anything until you reach it.” (That is why the town was called Zoar.)

²³ By the time Lot reached Zoar, the sun had risen over the land. ²⁴ Then the LORD rained down burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah—from the LORD out of the heavens. ²⁵ Thus he overthrew those cities and the entire plain, destroying all those living in the cities—and also the vegetation in the land. ²⁶ But Lot’s wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.

STUDY 11: Nehemiah 4:1–20 and 6:15–16

Nehemiah 4:1–20

¹ When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became angry and was greatly incensed. He ridiculed the Jews, ² and in the presence of his associates and the army of Samaria, he said, “What are those feeble Jews doing? Will they restore their wall? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they finish in a day? Can they bring the stones back to life from those heaps of rubble—burned as they are?”

³ Tobiah the Ammonite, who was at his side, said, 'What they are building—even a fox climbing up on it would break down their wall of stones!' ⁴ Hear us, our God, for we are despised. Turn their insults back on their own heads. Give them over as plunder in a land of captivity. ⁵ Do not cover up their guilt or blot out their sins from your sight, for they have thrown insults in the face of the builders. ⁶ So we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart.

⁷ But when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the people of Ashdod heard that the repairs to Jerusalem's walls had gone ahead and that the gaps were being closed, they were very angry. ⁸ They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it. ⁹ But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat.

¹⁰ Meanwhile, the people in Judah said, 'The strength of the laborers is giving out, and there is so much rubble that we cannot rebuild the wall.' ¹¹ Also our enemies said, 'Before they know it or see us, we will be right there among them and will kill them and put an end to the work.' ¹² Then the Jews who lived near them came and told us ten times over, 'Wherever you turn, they will attack us.'

¹³ Therefore I stationed some of the people behind the lowest points of the wall at the exposed places, posting them by families, with their swords, spears and bows. ¹⁴ After I looked things over, I stood up and said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, 'Don't be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your families, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes.'¹⁵ When our enemies heard that we were aware of their plot and that God had frustrated it, we all returned to the wall, each to our own work.

¹⁶ From that day on, half of my men did the work, while the other half were equipped with spears, shields, bows and armor. The officers posted themselves behind all the people of Judah¹⁷ who were building the wall. Those who carried materials did their work with one hand and held a weapon in the other, ¹⁸ and each of the builders wore his sword at his side as he worked. But the man who sounded the trumpet stayed with me.

¹⁹ Then I said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, 'The work is extensive and spread out, and we are widely separated from each other along the wall. ²⁰ Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, join us there. Our God will fight for us!'

Nehemiah 6:15–16

¹⁵ So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of Elul, in fifty-two days.¹⁶ When all our enemies heard about this, all the surrounding nations were afraid and lost their self-confidence, because they realized that this work had been done with the help of our God.

STUDY 12: Matthew 25:37–40

³⁷ 'Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? ³⁸ When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? ³⁹ When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' ⁴⁰ 'The King

will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

GLOSSARY

ADULT: Any person 18 years and older.

ATTITUDE: Opinion, feeling or position about people, events and/or things that is formed as a result of one's beliefs. Attitudes influence behaviour.

BELIEF: An idea that is accepted as true. It may or may not be supported by facts. Beliefs may stem from or be influenced by religion, education, culture and personal experience.

BLAME: When you feel or declare that (someone or something) is responsible for the sexual violence.

CHILD: Any person under the age of 18.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Confidentiality is an ethical principle that is associated with medical and social service professions. Maintaining confidentiality requires that the information is protected and only shared when the individual concerned has given permission to do so. All written information is maintained in a confidential place in locked files and only non-identifying information is written down on case files. Maintaining confidentiality means that case details or never discussed with family or friends, or with colleagues whose knowledge of the abuse is deemed unnecessary. There are limits to confidentiality while working with children.

COUNSELLING: The provision of professional assistance and guidance in resolving emotional, personal or psychological problems.

DISCLOSURE: The process of revealing information. Disclosure in the context of sexual abuse refers specifically to how a non-offending person (for example, a friend or church pastor) learns about an individual's experience of sexual violence. Individuals will disclose sexual violence

differently and disclosure is often a process rather than a single or specific event. Disclosure about sexual violence can be directly or indirectly communicated, voluntarily or involuntarily.

DISCRIMINATION: When one group of people is treated worse than others because of prejudice or incorrect information.

EQUALITY: Is about making sure people are treated fairly and given fair chances. Equality is not about treating everyone in the same way, but it recognizes that their needs are met in different ways. Promoting equality should remove discrimination in the areas of race, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation and age.

FACILITATOR: A leader who encourages others to share their knowledge, experience and thinking so that people can learn through sharing together.

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION/CUTTING: The practice of circumcising young women involving the removal of the sex organ or the sewing up of the vaginal opening.

FORCED MARRIAGE: Is a marriage in which one or both of the people are married without his or her consent or against their will. Forced child marriage is where a girl is forced to marry early, it usually means the end of her education if she is in school and the end of her being able to make important decisions about work, her health and her well-being. Abuse is common in child marriages.

FORGIVENESS: This is letting go of the need for revenge and releasing negative thoughts of bitterness and resentment.

GENDER: The social differences between men and women, or boys and girls that are learned (rather than the sexual differences which are biological).

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: An umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will; it is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between males and females. Gender-based violence encompasses a wide range of human rights violations, including sexual abuse, rape, domestic violence, sexual assault and harassment, trafficking of women and girls and several harmful traditional practices, including forced early marriage.

HARMFUL CULTURAL PRACTICES: These are cultural and religious traditions that are harmful physically or emotionally to the individuals involved.

INCLUSION: Is the action of including or of being included within a group or structure.

LEADERSHIP: Is the action of leading a group of people, organization or church, or the ability to do this.

PERPETRATOR: A person who directly inflicts or supports violence or other abuse inflicted on another against his/her will.

RAPE: Forcing a person to have sex against their wishes.

REPORTING: is the action of going to the police and providing a statement and evidence that sexual violence has occurred.

SAFE SPACE: A place where anyone can relax and be able to fully express, without fear of being made to feel uncomfortable, unwelcome or unsafe.

SELF STIGMA: The feeling that we are unworthy and shameful.

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION: Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust for sexual purposes. This includes profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.

STEREOTYPE: Ideas about something or someone that have become fixed through being widely used, but which do not necessarily apply in every case.

STIGMA: A feeling of being socially unacceptable, resulting in isolation, rejection and shame.

SUBMISSION: The action of accepting or yielding to a superior force or to the will or authority of another person.

SURVIVOR: A person who has survived/experienced sexual violence. The term 'survivor' can be used interchangeably with the term 'victim'. Throughout this resource, we use 'survivor'.

TRAUMA: Traumatic experiences usually accompany a serious threat or harm to an individual's life or physical well-being and/or a serious threat or harm to the life or physical well-being of the individual's child, spouse, relative or close friend. When people experience a disturbance to their basic psychological needs (safety, trust, independence, power, intimacy and esteem), they experience psychological trauma.

FURTHER READING AND USEFUL RESOURCE MATERIAL

Further information and resources can be found on the following websites:

- **Restored** www.restoredrelationships.org
Ending domestic abuse: a pack for churches:
<http://www.restoredrelationships.org/resources/info/51/>
- **'We Will Speak Out' coalition** www.wewillspeakout.org
Resources for churches and factsheets: <http://www.wewillspeakout.org/resources/>
- **Christians for Biblical Equality** <http://www.cbeinternational.org/>
- **Ujamaa Centre** <http://ujamaa.ukzn.ac.za/homepage.aspx>
- **Gender and Development Network** <http://www.gadnetwork.org.uk/>
- **Bridge** <http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/>
- **Tearfund** www.tearfund.org
- International learning zone: <http://tilz.tearfund.org/sexualviolence>

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